THE MARTYRED PRESIDENT.

WITHIN the last few weeks a common sorrow has spread throughout our land, such as has never befallen it since the day when England's Prince was stricken down in the fulness of his manhood. And yet it is for no prince, noble, statesman, patriot, whom we have been accustomed to see among us, to look up to, or to follow. He never trod the soil of our islands; not one in many thousands among us ever saw his face. An ocean separated us from him; he ruled over another State. And yet, at such an hour as this, we feel that ABRAHAM LINCOLN was indeed bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh—that the great race which reads the Bible in the same mother-tongue on both sides of the Atlantic, whatever differences of polity may separate its various fractions, is yet but one people. Strange workings of a Hand mightier than man's! The pistol of an assassin—born, it would seem, of an English father on American soil—has done more to bring this country and America together than all the years which have elapsed since a monarch's obstinacy tore them asunder. O! how blessedly different from those times of bitter fratricidal strife are these, when a widowed English Queen, anticipating the almost universal instinct of her people, could of her own accord address at once in her own hand to that other widow across the Atlantic the expression of her deep sympathy for the murder of the chief magistrate of the United States!

It were waste of time here to express horror at a crime which, taking it with all its circumstances, stands unexampled in political history. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Let us be content with awe to remember those words: "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord; I will repay." Yea, He will repay! The blood of the innocent was never shed before His eyes in vain. A deed as hideous as any, since the Son of God hung between heaven and earth on the slave's cross, has been perpetrated on His lowly follower, whom the Pharisees of this world mocked as a "rail-splitter," a "bargee," a "village attorney." He who is higher than the highest regardeth. The Judge of all the earth shall do right.

But God's vengeance is not as man's vengeance. His justice is shown by sparing the many guilty for the sake of the few righteous. His doom for sin was the sending of a Saviour. The revenge of martyrdom is never fulfilled but by the conversion of the world, which slew the martyrs, to the truths for which they bore witness. ABRAHAM LINCOLN, Freedom's last and greatest martyr, can only be avenged by the conversion to freedom of the slave-world. Already we have heard of the grief of Lee, of the tears of Ewell. Who can tell in how many bosoms horror of the crime will not ripen into abhorrence of the evil root from which it sprang? Who can tell how many gallant but hitherto misguided Southerners it will not rally to the cause of that Union which their fathers loved, worked for, fought for? By the thrill of sympathy which it has awakened amongst ourselves, may we not judge how much mightier should be that which it will awaken in men not only speaking the same language, but long united as one nation by a thousand ties of neighbourhood, interest, kinship, fellow-help and fellow-work? Take that simple record of ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S last-recorded hour of statesmanship: "He spoke very kindly of Lee." Oh, what a revenge was there already by anticipation for Booth's pistol-shot, over all Secessionists who bore yet a human heart within their bosom! And let us remember that it is not only an American that has fallen, but a Southerner born, a child of the Slave-State of Kentucky, and one who in youth had largely mingled with the men of the South, and worked for his bread among them; and that this it is which gave such weight to that testimony of his against slavery, which he has at last sealed with his blood. Let us rest assured, that to many a truly gentle and chivalrous heart at the South that blood will henceforth appeal in tones no longer to be resisted. Most remarkable is it indeed that the great witnesses for Union alike and for Freedom have in

America almost always been Southern men. Jefferson the Virginian gives for first utterance to American nationality that Declaration of Independence which proclaims the natural freedom and equality of all mankind; Washington, and the other great Virginian Presidents who follow him, establish the Union; Jackson the South Carolinian, with his Secretary of State, Livingstone of Louisiana, arrests for awhile its destruction, when threatened by the hotheaded "Nullificationists" of the South. And now, in the fulness of the time, the Kentuckian LINCOLN spends his life in the earnest endeavour to restore the Union on the ground of universal freedom, leaving his high office and the fulfilment of his task to another Southerner, the North Carolinian Andrew Johnson. Will not the South understand at last that Secession is treason against its own purest glories, against the fair fame of its greatest men?

We indeed must see that the cause of that Slave-Power, which declared that slavery was to be the corner-stone of its Government, has now melted away for ever in the blood of its latest victims. Acquit, as we most willingly should, the leaders of Secession of all complicity in the foul deed, yet it is the accursed spirit of slavery which spoke in the deed, in the words of the assassin. "Thus be it always to tyrants!" cried the frantic ruffian as he escaped across the stage, after having shot an unarmed man through the back of the head, by his wife's side, and in the midst of his countrymen. An utterance which would be ludicrous, if it were not ghastly,—if it did not indicate that utter perversion of man's spirit which the mere tolerance of slavery engenders, making him call evil good and good evil, and to mistake for a tyrant the man whose proud privilege throughout all time shall be, that he proclaimed freedom to four millions of his fellow-men. What superstructure the corner-stone of slavery may bear, the whole world should see henceforth.

The great American people, could we have understood the facts of a struggle, long shamefully misrepresented by a too large portion of our press, has been from the beginning, is doubly henceforth, entitled to our fullest sympathies whilst engaged in its present gigantic task of self-purification and self-reform. That God's blessing has rested upon it throughout that struggle,—in the arts of peace and in the arts of war,—in the reverses which it has known how to bear, and in the triumphs which it has known how to wait for, and when achieved, how to use,—in the valour of its generals, in the wisdom and gentleness of its rulers,—above all, in the stedfast self-devotion of its masses, we cannot doubt. The clash of warfare may be well-nigh over, but a vast work yet remains to be done. Let us hope and pray that it may be worthily fulfilled, and that upon a basis of large forgiveness for the errors of the past, but at the same time of equal rights and equal duties for all classes of citizens of whatever colour, a renewed Union may be built up, free from many of the political imperfections of the old, more truly worthy of the admiration of the world; and that the name of LINCOLN may inaugurate a series of rulers, who shall endear themselves even more to their countrymen than Washington and his great contemporaries did to their forefathers.

To the martyred President, such a Union will be the only true earthly monument; to his bereaved family, it will be the highest earthly consolation. *He* stands far above all puny pity of ours. That Lord whom he acknowledged in all his acts, and in none more signally than in that second Inaugural Message of his,—one of the noblest state-papers, because one of the lowliest, that ever dropped from the pen of an earthly ruler,—has called him to Himself. Shall we rebel, and say that it was too soon? It is written: "When the fruit is brought forth, IMMEDIATELY He putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Immediately,—whether that sickle take the shape of disease, or old age, or accident, or the assassin's pistol-shot; immediately,—for the Lord of the harvest knows without fail when the fruit is brought forth. Let us rest assured that for that brave and gentle spirit the suddenness of death had no terrors, and that to the voice of Him who is saying for ever, "Surely I come quickly," his only answer would be, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."